

8th-grader's pedaling prowess benefits Boys & Girls Club

By Paula Peterson

What started as a challenge during a spin class turned into a fundraising effort of more than \$1,000 by South Tahoe Middle School eighth-grader Mykala Muskovitz.

Muskovitz was in a spin class with her mother when local businesswoman Jana Walker Spano proposed a challenge. Spano would donate \$300 in Mykala's name to the Boys & Girls Club if she finished the Tour de Tahoe on Sept. 11.



Mykala Muskovitz, center, did more than ride 72 miles.

Photo/Paula Peterson

Muskovitz spent her summer getting ready for the 72-mile ride, which included weekly spin classes and finding a bike that could handle the trek. Bike, riding shoes and clothing in hand, she joined her parents, Adam and Wendy, that Sunday morning and the three proceeded to complete the ride in six hours.

They stopped only at official rest stops even though the tough

uphill climb near Sand Harbor would have made the best of bike riders want to take a break. When other people heard about Muskovitz's challenge by Spano, they wanted to be part of the fundraising efforts. Money came in from several people and Muskovitz was able to present the Boys & Girls Club with a check for \$725.

Local businesses that helped the fundraising besides Spano's Sealed With a Kiss and Lakefront Wedding Chapel businesses were Steve Kosmides of Lake Tahoe Plumbing & Heating, House & Garden Nutrients, Kevin and Ashley Evans of Southeast Freight, Steve and Trina Jones of NXT Ventures, Kristi Jouett of Sierra House Elementary, and Julianne Mehrrens of Skinapeel.

But it doesn't stop there. With the help of Spano, Muskovitz is going to take the remaining \$300 she raised and start a fund for Christmas shopping for the children of the South Lake Tahoe Women's Center.

Spano is sharing the "service above self" Rotary philosophy with young people as well as her employees in hopes of inspiring a future generation of philanthropists to be more community minded. She was proud to see Muskovitz accept the challenge without question and said, "Her motivation to help those kids far outweighed the overwhelming physical exhaustion she experienced. Never once did she consider giving up on them."

If you are interested in helping Muskovitz with her continuing fundraising efforts, contact her parents at muskovitz@sbcglobal.net or Spano at jana@shopswak.com.